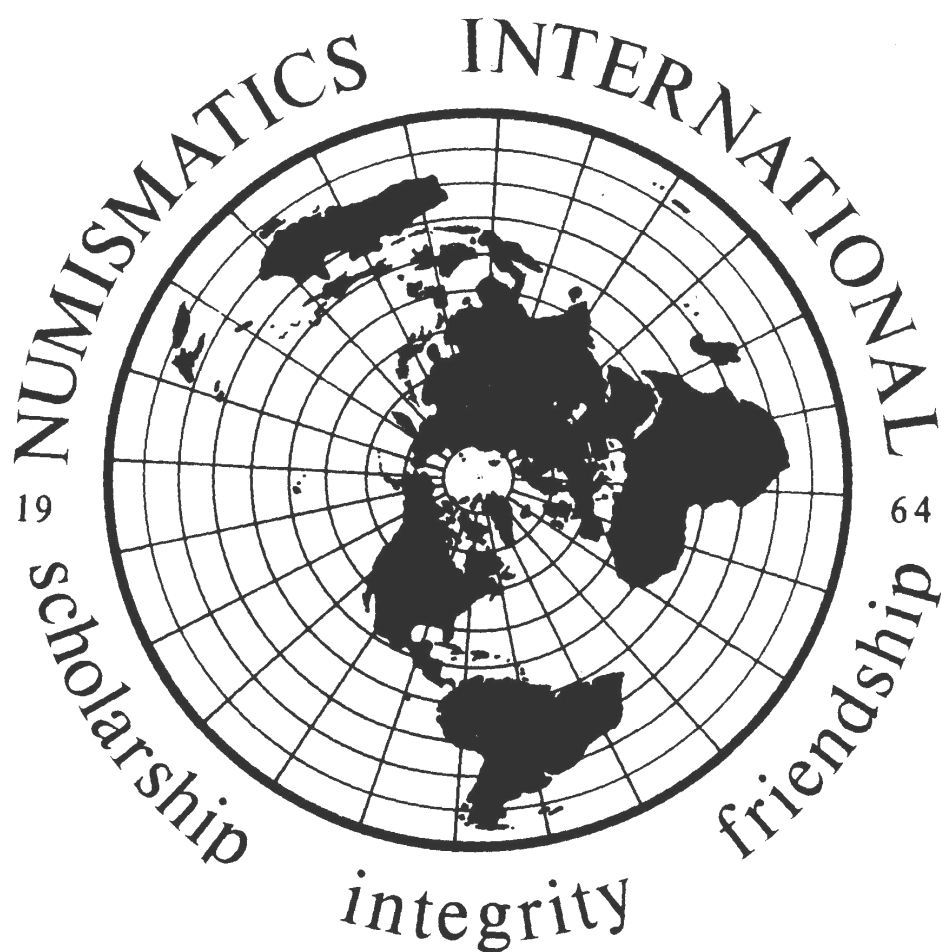


# NI Bulletin

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The world coin arena is active with several exciting events occurring. The Huntington Collection of Spanish Colonial Coins (Morton & Eden auction house) sold 6 March 2013 with strong prices reached. One coin that I personally wanted but did not win, a Philip V quarter real lot 224, hammered down at £11,200 which is 28 times the HIGH estimate (£300-400); after adding the buyer fee that is US\$ 19,800. The auction house Numismatica Ars Classica will offer 80 lots of Roman gold coins from the Huntington collection in their Auction 71 on 16 May 2013. By the time you receive this bulletin the Chicago International Coin Fair 2013 will have transpired with numerous coin talks and presentations. Furthermore, our own Numismatics International Seminar is fast approaching, June 7—9, 2013.

In this edition we have some discovery articles on Latin American numismatics by Carlos Jara and by Jorge Proctor. Greg Brunk continues his important series on countermarked coins with political messages and Robert Ronus presents a very interesting unpublished coin from Transylvania. We welcome first time contributor Derwin Mak to these pages who not only writes about coins but he even issues his own coins!

*Herman Blanton*

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## The Mystery of the Bad Grammar on the Central American Republic 8 Reales of 1847

Carlos Jara, NI #2529



**Fig. 1 (nominal 38mm)**  
**Central American Republic 8 Reales 1847 NG-A**

The Republic of Guatemala was founded in 1847, after deciding to secede from the Central American Republic. However, although the mint in Guatemala asked the new government whether it should now mint new coins with republican designs, no agreement on these designs could be reached and instead the order came down that the mint should continue to produce the 8 Reales of the Central American Republic type *without the slightest alteration*. Since the last officially released coin in this series was the one dated 1847, we can deduce from this that the 1847 date was henceforth frozen on all of the 8 Reales coins minted in subsequent years, which accounts for its relative lack of scarcity today vis-à-vis the other dates in this series. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that with very careful study characteristics may be discerned that might allow us to distinguish the coinage of later years, especially since we know from the contemporary documentation that the mint's engraver was not entirely happy with this edict.<sup>1</sup> This we know from documentation arising out of another well-known variety in this series, the 1846 8 Reales with the word CREZCA over CRESKA in the legend of the reverse.

The word "CREZCA" is part of the motto "LIBRE CREZCA FECUNDO" ("grow free and fecund," or "in freedom grow fecund") that appears on the reverse of the Central American coinage struck in Guatemala between 1824 and 1847, and in Costa Rica in 1831. The motto refers to the Ceiba tree in the center of the coin, which represents the Federation itself (just as the five mountains on the obverse represent each of the five countries in the Federation). However, the word "CREZCA" was originally misspelled "CRESKA" in 1824, and this misspelling persisted right from the beginning all the way through most of 1846. The year 1846 saw several

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<sup>1</sup> This engraver was José Casildo España, who had held this office since independence from Spain in 1821 (in fact he engraved the 1821 Independence Medal struck in Guatemala) until at least January 1846. Incidentally, on the 27th of that month, he asked for an emergency advance on his pay (which was already in arrears!) as his wife had died the night before and he found himself "absolutely without the means" of arranging for her burial. See Archivo General de Centro America (AGCA), Fondo A3, Legajo 1397).

interesting varieties of 8 Reales coins minted. Early that year we see an 1846 still with the original CRESCA spelling (see Fig. 2.) This was soon followed by an 1846/2 overdated coin, also with CRESCA. Perhaps the new 1846 die had broken and the engraver put back in service an older die from 1842 after punching the 6 over the 2. Late in 1846 the legend was finally corrected as well, resulting in an interesting “CREZCA/CRESCA” variety. This is plainly evident in Fig. 3.

Engraver Casildo España at the Guatemala mint clearly refers to this spelling error and sought permission to correct the word CRESCA for the 1847 coinage. Thus, the CREZCA variant is definitely not an error but a deliberate correction of bad spelling performed by the engraver.

Reverses of two different 1846/2 8 Reales<sup>2</sup>



**Fig. 2**  
**“CRESCA”**



**Fig. 3**  
**“CREZCA/CRESCA”**

However, strangely, no 1847-dated 8 Reales coin is currently known to exist with the corrected reverse legend “CREZCA,” and we have personally traced well over a hundred different pieces. Since, incontrovertibly, the spelling error was detected (as

<sup>2</sup> Both the “A” and “A. E.” initials correspond to First Assayer Apolinario España (son of Engraver Casildo España) who had been Second Assayer from 1835 until 1839 when his post was eliminated for economic reasons. Apolinario España assumed the post of First Assayer on January 5, 1844 due to the passing of First Assayer Manuel Muñoz on December 19, 1843 and then resigned this post at the end of 1845 or early 1846 in order to take up the post of Engraver again (his true love) despite the fact that being Assayer was considered more important in that it guaranteed the real value of the metal and the good credit of the government depended on the good execution of this work.

The initial “B” which also appears on some of the Guatemalan coinage dated 1846 corresponds to Mint Director Benito Muñoz (brother of Manuel Muñoz!) who stepped in on the few occasions when no First Assayer was available: thus his initial “B” also appears occasionally in other instances (for instance on some of the coinage dated 1836). Here is an excerpt from letter dated Jan. 28, 1846, from Manuel Cerezo to the Minister of Exchequer and War. *“Una de las notables faltas que encontré en esta casa, es la de que no había ensayador, y que estas funciones unidas a las otras las ha estado desempeñando solo el señor Muñoz. Este me manifestó que el señor Apolinario España que servía este destino lo renunció, porque le impedía dedicarse al gravado. Conociendo que el destino de ensayador es un empleo de bastante importancia, pues es el que declara el verdadero valor de los metales, resultando que de su buen desempeño, pende el crédito del Gobierno, pues las monedas deben salir con la ley y peso establecido....”* Ref. Archivo General de Centro America A3, legajo 1397.

we see by the correction effected for part of 1846), it is very strange that an amended die with the corrected spelling was not used in 1847, and that they instead reverted back to using the legend with the “CRESCA” spelling error for that year’s issue. As we will see, the explanation for this is straightforward, and quite interesting.

On December 20th, 1847, the Minister of the Exchequer of Guatemala sent the following reply to a query submitted by the mint’s director (for clarity we also transcribe this prior communication from the mint director below). Therein we see clearly that Engraver Casildo España had noticed that the dies carried a spelling mistake and desired to correct it:

*“Regarding the inscription that [the aforesaid] current coinage carries on its reverse, it has been notorious that the word CREZCA is written with an S instead of a Z, and it would be convenient to correct this grammatical error.”*

However, the Minister of the Exchequer’s reply, ran as follows:

*“The Supreme Government, having present the official note from you dated the 18th instant, wherein you ask whether any modifications should be made in the dies that are to be ~~prepared~~ [sic] utilized for the mintage of the upcoming next year along with the other matters that You mention, has decided on this date that until such time as the Government decrees otherwise, the minting of coins shall continue to be made **without the slightest alteration, not even in the date which shall continue to be that of this year of 1847.**”*

This order was carried out exactly as instructed, the coins carrying not only the frozen 1847 date, but also continuing the spelling mistake “CRESCA” (see Fig. 1.)

The above is a curious example of how Government bureaucracy can influence the operation of a Mint, in this case to the extent of perpetuating a blatant spelling error for over six years!

It was not until 1853 that the first truly republican 8 Reales of Guatemala was issued—the extremely rare “Columbus” 8 Reales of that date (see Fig. 4), of which only four examples are known to exist today, and which is shrouded in mystery. It is not known why this beautiful coin was not continued, and why so few have survived.



**Fig. 4: (nominal 39mm)  
Guatemala 1854 AE Columbus 8 Reales**

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION OF ORIGINAL CORRESPONDENCE

Transcription of Original Text (Spanish)

Translation

*Sr. Ministro de Hacda del Supremo Gobierno*

Mr. Minister of the Exchequer of the Supreme Government

***Guatemala, diciembre 20 de 1847.***

**Guatemala, December 20, 1847.**

*Contestese al Señor Superintendente de la Casa de Moneda que mientras no se disponga por el Gobierno otra cosa la acuñación se continúe haciendo como hasta ahora sin la mas pequeña novedad, ni aun en la fecha que deberá continuar siendo la de este año de 1847.*

Answer the Superintendent of the Mint that so long as the Government does not decree otherwise, the minting shall continue to be made without the slightest modification, not even in the date which shall remain that of this year of 1847.

***Guatemala, Diciembre 18, 1847***

**Guatemala, December 18, 1847**

*Con fha 16 del corriente me dice el grabador de Casa de Moneda lo que sigue.*

On the 16th day instant, the engraver of the Mint has told me the following.

*“Para poder preparar los trojeles que deben servir en las acuñaciones del año entrante de 1848, necesito saber si hay algunas reformas que hacerles; si llevan la misma leyenda que se ha puesto a la moneda corriente, o si deberá variarse con la de Republica de Guatemala.*

“In order to prepare the trussels [dies] that will be used in the coinage of the upcoming year of 1848, I need to know if there are any modifications that need to be performed on them; whether they will carry the same legend that is found on the current coins, or if this legend should be changed to Republica de Guatemala.

*En cuanto a la inscripción que tiene en el reverso la espresada moneda corriente, ha sido muy notable en la palabra CREZCA estar escrito con S en lugar de Z, cuyo yerro gramatical seria conveniente se corrigiese.*

Regarding the inscription that said current coinage carries on its reverse, it has been most notable in the word CREZCA that it is written with an S instead of Z, and it would be convenient to correct this grammatical error.

*En su virtud lo hago presente a V. para que se sirva hacer la correspondiente consulta al Gobierno Supremo y comunicarme su resolución.”*

In virtue of which, I am informing you of this matter so that you may make the corresponding consultation with the Government and communicate to me its resolution.”

*Y lo transcribo a VS. para que se sirva elevarlo al conocimiento del Supremo Gobierno con el objeto de que se digne resolver lo que estime conveniente.*

And I transcribe it to you so that you may elevate this to the attention of the Supreme Government with the object that they should resolve whatever they deem convenient.

*Con tal motivo protesto a VS mi respeto y consideraciones.*

With this purpose, I present to you my respects and considerations.

*Manuel Cerezo.*

Manuel Cerezo

*Señor Superintendente de la Casa de*

Mister Superintendent of the Mint

Moneda

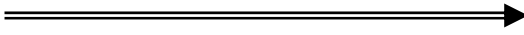
20th of December, 1847

Diciembre 20 de 1847

*El Supremo Gobierno con presa [presencia] de la nota ofil [oficial] de VS fecha 18 del corriente en que consulta si hay alguna reforma que hacer en los troqueles que deben prepararse servir en la acuñación del año próximo entrante con lo demás que VS expresa, se sirvió en acuerdo de esta fecha disponer se converse a VS que mientras el Gobierno no disponga a otra cosa la acuñación se seguirá haciendo como hasta ahora sin la mas pequeña novedad, ni aun en la fecha que deberá continuar siendo la de este año de 1847.*

The Supreme Government, having present the official note from you dated the 18th instant, wherein you ask whether any modifications should be made in the dies that are to be prepared [sic] utilized for the mintage of the upcoming next year along with the other matters that You mention, has decided on this date that until such time as the Government decrees otherwise, the minting of coins shall continue to be made without the slightest alteration, not even in the date which shall continue to be that of this year of 1847.

Continued on next page



## Book News and Reviews

Member Roberto Jovel announced the publication of four of his books which are available from book sellers and notice of a forthcoming book.

*Numismatic History of El Salvador in the Nineteenth Century: From the breakup of the Central American Federation through 1896* (English Edition).

*Medallas de Proclama de Reyes de España en Antiguo Reyno de Goathemala: Usadas como monedas en Centroamérica* (Spanish Edition). [Proclamation medals of the Spanish Kings, used as coinage in Central America.]

*Monedas de proclama durante la anexión al Imperio Mexicano de Iturbide: En Centroamérica* (Spanish Edition). [Proclamation medals issued during the Central American Annexation to Iturbide's Mexico Empire, 1822 to 1823.]

*Las Monedas en los Tiempos de Jesucristo: Identificación de las monedas mencionadas en los Evangelios* (Spanish Edition). [Coins during the time of Jesus Christ: Identification of the coins mention in the Gospels.]

Kindly note that in cooperation with Manuel Chacón, the Curator of the Numismatic Museum of Costa Rica, we have prepared a book on *The Influence of Francisco Morazán on Central American Coinage*, that is to be released in early 2013. We trust that these recent publications will contribute to numismatic knowledge for the Central American region.

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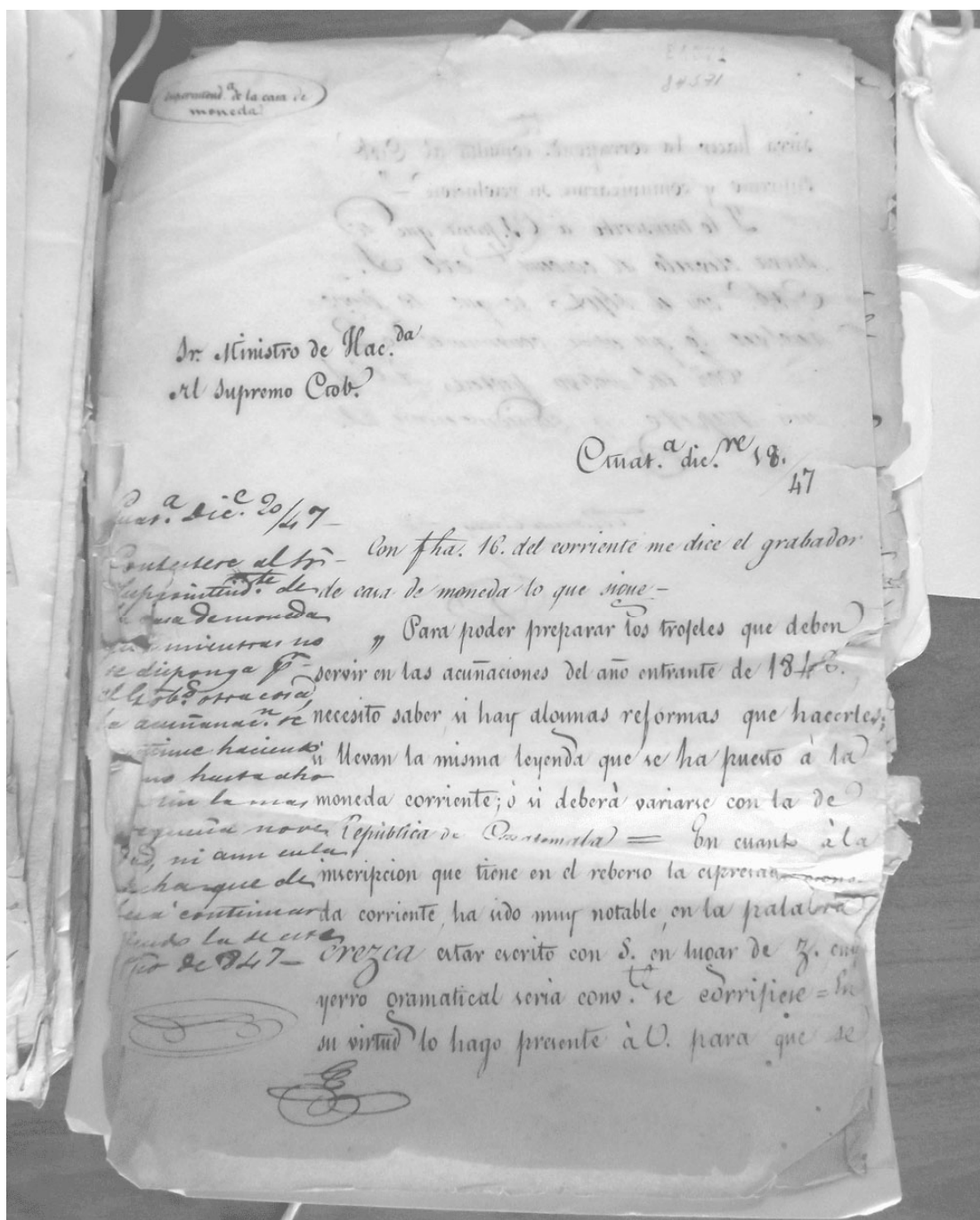


Fig. 5

Original letter of December 18th, 1847 by Manuel Cerezo, Superintendent of the Mint of Guatemala to the Minister of the Exchequer of the Supreme Government of the Republic of Guatemala, with reply of December 20th, 1847 to the Superintendent by the Minister in the margin to the left.



## **Recently Discovered Documentary Evidence Indicates the Possible Existence of an Eighteenth Century Mint in Panama**

**Jorge A. Proctor, NI #2732**

Nowadays we know as fact that Panama did indeed establish an ephemeral mint that minted coins during the sixteenth century. But recently discovered documents from the General Archive of the Indies in Seville and the National Historical Archive in Madrid reveal that this may not have been the last attempt to establish a mint facility in Panama by the Spanish Crown. According to these newly discovered documents a plan was drafted in the eighteenth century to establish a new mint there.

The new mint that was to be established would be used to mint all the gold that was extracted from the rich mines in the region into gold doubloons, and thus prevent fraud that could otherwise be committed. But the question is, was this mint established or did it just remain as another failed attempt at this enterprise? Although at this time it seems that this project may have not gone past its proposed phase, I will be cautious not to jump to any early conclusions, as happened with regards to Panama's sixteenth century mint. This new discovery deserves a more extensive investigation, with many questions remaining unanswered at this time, before true success or failure can be assessed.

So, what do we know about this newly discovered proposed mint? Its story began in 1703, when King Philip V of Spain wrote on November 2 of that year to Don Fernando Dávila Bravo de Laguna, Field Marshall and Knight of the Order of St. James, Governor and Captain General of the Province of Tierra Firme and President of the Audiencia of Panama, to notify him that a reliable source had informed him of the discovery of a new source of gold ore at 11 sites located three leagues from Panama and to the South of the Port of Capiara, and 14 leagues from other previously discovered mines. The king's reliable source must have been Fray Juan de Argüelles, Bishop of the Cathedral of Panama, who in fact wrote to the king on April 11, 1703 to inform him of these discoveries, in addition to him also mentioning that of nine other gold mines also discovered in the town of Capiara. The Bishop of the Cathedral of Panama made mention of these discoveries while trying to gain support for the erection of a chapel in the area of these new gold mines, as he said that this was necessary to better serve the faith of the inhabitants of these mining sites.

These discoveries caused great excitement in Spain and adding them to the already famous mine of the Holy Spirit of Cana (*Espíritu Santo de Cana*) in Darién, which alone produced approximately 15 tons of gold between 1690 and 1724, made Panama the richest region with respect to gold bullion in all of the Americas during these years. The type of impact that these discoveries had can be easily seen on the population statistics, which record that the population of the mining town of Santa Cruz de Cana in Darién, located at the base of this rich gold mine, reached as many as 20,000 inhabitants during this period, where as the Capital city of Panama only had about 7,000 residents.

The king, who was mainly interested in the better collection of his Royal taxes (*el Quinto Real*), was now requesting that the President of the Audiencia of Panama let him know if it would be beneficial to establish a mint in the city of Panama, a mint being proposed by the king himself, so that gold doubloons could be coined there and thus avoid great frauds that could be committed by retaining the gold ore as bullion without coining.

Immediately, and at the same time that the President of the Audiencia of Panama was being consulted, the king assigned this issue to his Council of the Indies for them to study. But the Council of the Indies, worried that they did not have all the information required regarding the new gold discoveries in the Province of Tierra Firme, determined that it was better to transfer all matters regarding this mint project to the Audiencia of Panama, where, from Panama, they could convene a board meeting composed of high ranking officials to discuss the possibility of establishing this new mint facility there. For this the Council of the Indies then instructed Panama to inform the king with all the details of their discussions and, that once this issue had been debated and voted upon there, they could present to the king all the findings so that through his Council of the Indies he could take the resolution that he considered most appropriate.

During this period there was much instability in the supervision of Panama with many problems in the governance of the isthmus. This added to corruption and ongoing problems with smuggling and piracy in the area created delays in being able to convene the requested board meeting. But the delays did not detract from the King's interest in the project, and so it was that in 1709 he decided to send new correspondence to Don Joseph Hurtado de Amezaga. Amezaga, who was a Brigadier General in the Spanish Army, Knight of the Order of Calatrava, and had just been appointed as Governor and Captain General of the Province of Tierra Firme and President of the Audiencia of Panama (a post that he would fulfill in 1711), was now being given detailed information regarding the work that had been done toward the gold mines recently discovered near the city of Panama and the possibility of establishing the mint that had been proposed for Panama, so that he could know in advance the affairs in the area he was tasked with governing and better perform his duties.

Accompanying the letter that the king sent to Amezaga were also written accounts by Amezaga's predecessors to the post of President of the Audiencia of Panama, these being: Don Fernando Bravo de Laguna de Ávila (president of Panama from 1702 to 1706) and José Antonio de la Rocha y Carranza, better known as the Marquis de Villa Rocha (President of the Audiencia of Panama for a few months in 1699, from 1706-1708 and, later, he would also hold this post for a few hours in 1711).

Also, accompanying this letter and with a tone of importance and consequences, were a series of outlined points that, as it was said, the Council of the Indies had already begun to review. But almost as soon as they began to see them, the prosecutor determined that the Council could not continue to review them without having more information on the current state of the Kingdom of Tierra Firme, and thus they decided to leave them pending any resolution. With this decision made, the prosecutor from the Council recommended that it would be best to send them back to Panama, where the Ministers and Royal Officials there could make a better determination to what needed to be done. This was agreed and the decision was made to add them to the discussions that the board meeting that had been ordered to be held in Panama would have. With this proposal and so that the Council could take the best resolution on the matters possible, Panama was asked to remit back to Spain, without the slightest delay, a copy of all the dialogs [transcript] that were to be held by the officials at the board meeting, and also, for the President of the Audiencia of Panama to send, in a separate report, his own personal advice with his recommendations.

Finally, and concluding the letter sent to Amezaga, he was notified that Fernando de Alencastre Noroña y Silva, 1st Duke of Linares and Marquis of Valdefuentes, as the newly appointed Viceroy of Peru, was also being informed of everything that had been said to him. The intention of providing the Duke of Linares with all this information was to direct him that if he was to find himself in Panama, while on his way to Peru, when the orders to convene the board meeting arrived there, that he would be responsible for presiding over this meeting with the assistance of Amezaga, as the President-elect of the Audiencia of Panama. But the letter sent to the Duke of Linares was sent prematurely, as his selection to the post of Viceroy of Peru was later changed for that of the Viceroyalty of New Spain, thus preventing him from executing these orders.

On November 14, 1715 the 60-gun galleon *Nuestra Señora de las Viñas y Santa Rosa* (Our Lady of the Vineyards and Saint Rose), departed Cádiz, Spain, en route to Cartagena of the Indies, under the command of Don Nicolás de la Rosa Suárez, Count of Vega Florida. Aboard this ship, which was traveling in company of the merchants: *San Carlos* (St. Charles) and *Nuestra Señora del Rosario* (Our Lady of the Rosary) [alias *El Cubano* (The Cuban)], was Don Carmine Nicolás Caracciolo, the 5th Neapolitan Prince of Santo Bono, grandee of Spain, XIII Marquis of Buchianico and XIII Count of Chiavi. The Prince of Santo Bono, as he was better known, had previously served as the Spanish Ambassador in Rome and Venice (1702), and was now traveling to take his post of Viceroy of Peru; a post that had been granted to him in 1713.

With its complement of 715 people, including crew and passengers, it was discovered, once at sea, that the *Nuestra Señora de las Viñas y Santa Rosa* was also carrying some 300 stowaways; many of which died of thirst and hunger before the ship arrived at the port of Cartagena on January 9, 1716.

On June 22, 1716, the Prince of Santo Bono was finally able to write back to Spain from the Americas and to present them with a detailed report regarding the conditions in which he had found the Kingdom of Tierra Firme upon his arrival. It is as part of this communication that the Prince of Santo Bono took the opportunity to discuss the importance of erecting there the mint that was being proposed for Panama.

The Prince of Santo Bono remitted with his letter a paper that had been given to him upon his arrival by Don Jose Antonio de la Rocha and Carranza, the Marquis of Villa Rocha (written when the Marquis was Governor of that Kingdom—possibly between 1706 and 1708). In this paper the Marquis of Villa Rocha outlined several issues, including: reformatations needed to the job descriptions of the offices held by the Ministers of the Audiencia and subordinates, their wages, the construction of a new building for sole use of the Audiencia, Accounting Office (*Contaduría*), and Secular Council of Panama (*Cabildo Secular de Panamá*), the move of the customs office that was in the town of Cruces to that of Gorgona, and several other issues. In total, this paper presented 31 issues at hand, and it is not surprising that we find among them, once again, the issue of the mint.

As can be observed from this communication, Spain was already familiar with this paper from the Marquis of Villa Rocha, this being a copy of another similar one that had been given to the Spanish Court by the Marquis of Villa Rocha in 1714, with the motive of familiarizing the Council of the Indies with the state of affairs in the Kingdom of Tierra Firme. But these same points were now being presented, once

again, as it was said that when previously received by the Council of the Indies in Spain they had decided to leave them pending, almost as soon as they had began deliberating on them, and they had decided that it would be better just to give them back to the Marquis of Villa Rocha, leaving him as Panama's representative, since it was their belief that he would know better what was worthy of remedy.

The reality was that the Marquis of Villa Rocha, alone from Panama, could not solve all the concerns that had been outlined in his paper. So, taking advantage that the Prince of Santo Bono was in the city of Panama then while on his way to Peru, he decided to make him aware of all that he had informed Spain, so that the Prince of Santo Bono, by his own hand and words, could inform Spain of the importance of these concerns. This tactic appears to have worked, as, indeed, the Prince of Santo Bono notified Spain that after he had read and considered carefully all that had been said by the Marquis of Villa Rocha through his paper, he had acknowledged that all of the concerns presented were true in their entirety and due to this he had offered the Marquis his complete support.

The Prince of Santo Bono, although admitting awareness at the time that it would be impossible to implement what was needed to solve some of these issues due to the shortage of resources, he was still remitting back to Spain the Marquis' complete paper, in its entirety and without alteration, as he had taken into consideration these concerns as being all very important and he wanted for Spain to review all of them as equally important, so that they could send back the needed instructions to start resolving some of them, leaving the ones that could not be resolved at present time for a more favorable one.

After offering the Marquis of Villa Rocha his support, the Prince of Santo Bono started narrating what had been done toward the establishment of this mint, bearing witness to his statements when saying that in accordance with the Royal Decree of June 14, 1709 the board meeting requested had been convened in Panama on June 16, 1716 so that they could study all matters regarding the establishment of the new mint requested for Panama. Besides himself, also present at this meeting were: Don José Antonio de la Rocha and Carranza (the Marquis of Villa Rocha), Don Joseph Hurtado de Amezaga (President of the Audiencia of Panama), the four *Oidores* (Judges) and the Prosecutor of the Audiencia, the Royal Treasurer, the Chief Constable of the Royal Treasury and the Engineer Don Juan de Herrera y Sotomayor [Military Engineer of the City of Cartagena, Governor of the Castle of San Felipe de Barajas in Cartagena and Director of the Fortifications of the Viceroyalty of Peru—who was in Panama at the time to rehabilitate the mine of the Holy Spirit of Cana (*Espíritu Santo de Cana*) in the Darién, following a landslide that had taken place].

The Marquis of Villa Rocha presided over this meeting, reporting to all present, both in writing and orally, and saying that this enterprise would be very useful to the Royal Service and the public good. He continued stating that the establishment of the Mint would not incur any expense to the Royal Treasury, as he was offering to take in sworn inheritance (*juro de heredad*) all the offices that the mint was to have, making himself responsible for the entire cost of establishing this mint, if there were no buyers to the offices of Treasurer and others. Villa Rocha did not see that there could be any objection in him being granted these offices in sworn inheritance as he pointed out that this was a practice that had also taken place in the other Spanish Colonial mints, and so it was that it could be done as well in Panama. Once the mint facility

was built, Villa Rocha would then provide the king with a report of the cost he had incurred, just for his knowledge, as if the king did not agree that it would best benefit his services to cover this cost through his treasury, he was sure to be in agreement that he would surely be benefited with the collection of the *Quintos* (King's Fifth tax) that was to take place there.

While all in the meeting were in agreement that the establishment of this mint facility was necessary, be that through the Marquis' proposal for him to cover the cost, or through Spain's treasury, there was no doubt that minting coins there would increase profit. It was observed that by bringing the gold to the mint to be made into coins the supplier could be paid for the gold in its intrinsic value, rather than the way that it was done at the mines, which was to leave it in the form of *tejos* (small gold pieces) and gold dust. It was also agreed that this mint would be of great benefit to the public, in general, who would be greatly benefited when bringing gold there by receiving its true value, without being exposed to having to sell it, sometimes for 17 Reales, other times for 18, and even for as much as 20 Reales by accident, as it was known to have occurred at the mining sites.

As alleged, everyone in the meeting agreed that the presence of this mint would prevent fraud and that once people knew that they could bring their gold to the city of Panama to be introduced into the mint to be minted into coins, they would stop selling it in other places for a higher price than it was worth. The necessity of establishing this mint was highlighted by the fact that there was such a shortage of coins in the Kingdom of Tierra Firme at the time that they had already begun to observe how they were now using liquor and tobacco in place of coinage in that kingdom, creating great damages. Once gold coins were minted, they could easily be introduced and circulate in the areas where the gold mines were located, as they had taken notice that all the commercial goods there carried a very elevated price.

At the conclusion of the meeting, and on behalf of His Majesty, this board determined that it was their opinion that it would be convenient to establish a mint in Panama. On July 2, 1716 the Marquis of Villa Rocha sent the full report back to the Council of the Indies, taking the opportunity to ask that, if Spain agreed that Panama should proceed with this project, that he be granted permission to construct the mint in the same site that had been previously chosen to build the Casas Reales (royal administration buildings or offices, lit. "royal houses"); a site in the Plaza Mayor that had not yet been used and for which there was little hope that the Casas Reales would be built there. Since this site was currently available and at the disposal of the Royal Treasury, Villa Rocha was requesting its use to avoid incurring any additional costs as he had already volunteered to build the mint at his own cost.

According to a letter dated July 3, 1717 and on behalf of the king, the Council of the Indies took into consideration all that had been discussed in Panama, paying special attention to what was said about the discovery of the gold mines in this region, how they detailed the loss of gold dust, the withdrawal of this gold dust by foreigners and fraud which was committed in this manner to His Majesty and his subjects. After carefully studying the information that came from Panama, the Council of the Indies told the king that although the Compilation of the Laws of the Kingdoms of the Indies (*Recopilación de las Leyes de los Reynos de Indias*) only allowed for mints in: Mexico, Santo Domingo, Santa Fe and Potosi, they could find no objection in adding one more to the city of Panama.

The Council of the Indies explained that by establishing a mint in Panama, there would be no need to take the gold from the Kingdom of Tierra Firme to the Mint of Santa Fe, this being the closest at this time to this region, so that in Panama gold coins could be minted to prevent gold dust from being removed by strangers to unknown territories, leaving considerable losses to His Majesty and his subjects. In this manner the Council agreed that it would be convenient to order the erection of this mint, but not at the expense of the Marquis of Villa Rocha, as he had proposed, nor as a result of the collection of the sale of its offices. The Council of the Indies saw noticeable drawbacks in these methods of construction, saying that it would be better and more favorable to have this construction executed at the cost of the Royal Treasury, selling its offices in a separate manner, and integrating all the proceeds collected back into the Royal Treasury where it could be of greater benefit to His Majesty.

Once the Council of the Indies ended their discussions on this issue, the report was sent back to King Philip V, who on October 28, 1717 from San Lorenzo sent his final decision to the Council of the Indies. In this letter, King Philip V approves the Mint of Panama, saying:

*"... I am also satisfied with the Council's views regarding the erection of the mint in Panama but not that the construction be charged to my Royal Treasury, but by the product of the offices, which are to be sold before all things, be this work executed, preventing that the gold merchants, and others who knew all about the minting of coins could carry with it any excuse for more money than its intrinsic value. "*

With this affirmative response from the king, and as was customary, it is certain that the Council of the Indies would have immediately proceeded with drafting the decree that the new mint was to follow. This decree, which is still missing, would certainly contain the designs of the coins that were to be minted in this new mint facility in Panama, the authorized denominations and most importantly, the description of the mintmark that was now to be used by Panama's new mint.

Although hope remains that a copy of this missing decree could someday be found, it is still possible that this document may not have survived the test of time, as Panama suffered a major fire in 1737 that in about five hours reduced the city to ashes, destroying 95% of its houses and buildings and most importantly suffered the complete loss of archives without a single paper being saved. In a brief letter dated April 3, 1737, which recounts the events that took place on the night from the 2nd to 3rd of February 1737, night of the great fire, we are told that the fire burned down most of the city, including the Casas Reales—Audiencia and Accounting Office, without them being able to extract the wealth of the Royal Treasury or any of the papers in its archive, and only saved some of the houses that were at the corners of the city and two churches: The Church of the Lady of Mercy (La Merced) and the Church of St John of God (*San Juan de Dios*). This explains the big gaps between the documentation that we have for Panama during this period.

Speaking of this fire and of interest to our study, we find that in 1737 the Casas Reales were located in the *Plaza Mayor* (main square), next to the Cathedral. This is of interest because the king had not authorized the construction of these buildings on this site, and although it is known that at least since 1729 they had been moved to the Plaza Mayor, in the house that was rented from Doña Angela Ysasi Oyarzabe [This according to Dr. Alfredo Castellero Calvo who in his book *The Imagined City* (La



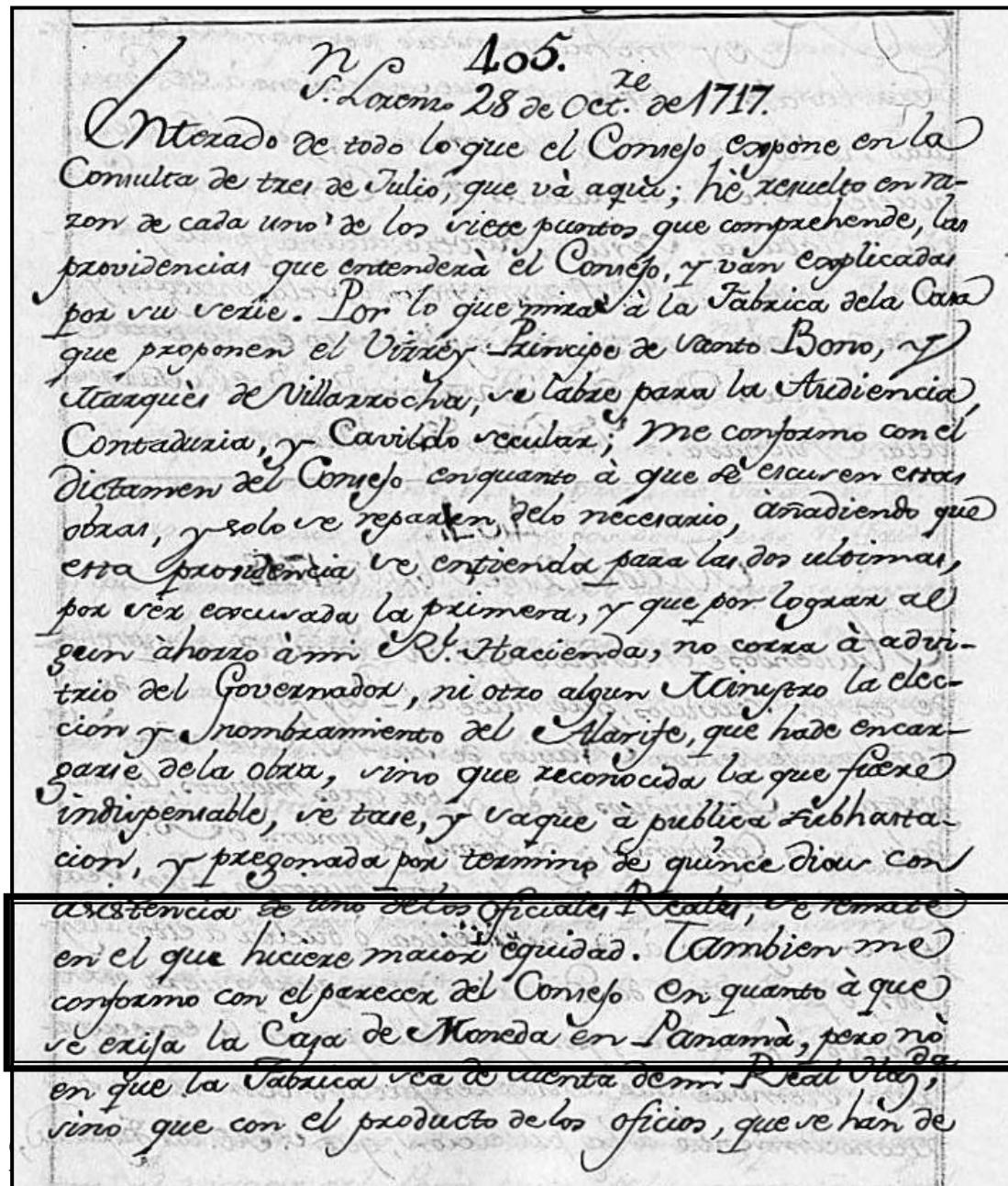
*Ciudad Imaginada*), tells us that Doña Angela Ysasi Oyarzabe's house was located opposite to the Cathedral, on the corner of the Nuns Street (*Calle de las Monjas*) (now Central Avenue) and the street in between the current Hotel Central], this house of Doña Angela Oyarzabe Ysasi was not next to the Cathedral and it is possible that, this being the place that seems to have been proposed for the construction of the Mint, that if the construction of the mint facility had in fact began, that after the failure of this project this could have been reverted back to the disposal of the Royal Treasury, being then transferred for use of the Casas Reales, which would then explain its location here by the time of the 1737 fire. All in all, even if we find it to be true that the construction of the mint could in fact have been started, we do not know if the building was completed, and we certainly do not know if Panama was able to mint coins during this period or not. Therefore, many questions still remain on this topic.

Finally, and of importance to this study, we have that the mine of the Holy Spirit of Cana (*Espíritu Santo de Cana*) in Darién was completely destroyed during the attack of Carlos Tibón in 1724. This was a major blow to the economy of the Spanish Crown and the Kingdom of Tierra Firme. Even though the Spaniards did try to repair the mine after its destruction in 1724, these attempts failed and the area was eventually abandoned in 1727. So, if the mint actually minted coins, this could have only occurred between 1718 (the earliest year when the decree for the new production of coins in Panama could have arrived in this city) and 1727 (the recorded year for the complete disappearance of the great riches of gold in the Kingdom of Tierra Firme—this, at least until new discoveries of gold were made, again, in the Province of Veraguas at the end of the eighteenth century). Also worth mentioning is a curious event that took place in 1720, where the biggest supporter of Panama Mint Project, Don José Antonio de la Rocha and Carranza, the Marquis of Villa Rocha, was captured with his wife, the Marchioness Doña Teresa Polanco Manrique de Lara and (a native of Lima), by the English pirate John Clipperton near Guayaquil, while traveling from Panama to the port of Callao. Clipperton, traveling north on the Pacific Ocean, dropped-off the Marchioness with her luggage at the port of Nicoya (in what is now Costa Rica). But Clipperton kept the Marquis of Villa Rocha captive, so he could ask for a ransom, a reward that he would never receive as when Clipperton reached the Mariana Islands' archipelago, the Marquis was able to escape his captors and safely returned to the hands of the Spaniards. Being born on June 20, 1661 in Quito, Don José Antonio de la Rocha and Carranza finally died of old age in Spain in 1726.

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N<sup>o</sup> 405.  
 S. Lorenzo 28 de Oct. de 1717.

Enterado de todo lo que el Consejo expone en la Consulta de tres de Julio, que va aquí; he resuelto en razón de cada uno de los siete puntos que comprehende, las providencias que entienda el Consejo, y van explicadas por su vez. Por lo que mira a la Fábrica de la Casa que proponen el Virrey, Principe de Santo Bono, y Marqués de Villanueva, se labre para la Audiencia, Contaduría, y Cavildo secular; me conformo con el dictamen del Consejo en quanto a que se escusen otras obras, y solo se reparen, de lo necesario, añadiendo que esta providencia se entienda para las dos ultimas, por ver enmendada la primera, y que por lograr el buen ahorro a mi R. Hacienda, no coma a adri- tajo del Governador, ni otro algun Ministro la elec- cion y nombramiento del Alarife, que hade encar- garse de la obra, sino que reconocida la que fuere indispensable, se tase, y vague a publica subhanta- cion, y pregonada por termino de quinze dias con asistencia de uno de los oficiales Reales, se remate en el que hiciere maior equidad. Tambien me conformo con el parecer del Consejo en quanto a que se exija la Casa de Moneda en Panamá, pero no en que la Fábrica sea de cuenta de mi Real Hazienda, sino que con el producto de los oficios, que se han de

Facsimile of the letter from King Philip V of Spain, dated October 28, 1717, authorizing the erection of a new mint in Panama. Above can be read where the King approves this new mint by saying: "I am also satisfied with the Council's views regarding the erection of the mint in Panama..."

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## Locked in a Gilded Cage Heritage Rare Coins



Valentinian II (AD 375-395). AV solidus (21 mm, 4.44 gm, 6h). Constantinople, AD 391-393, D N VALENTINI - ANVS P F AVG, pearl-diademed, draped and cuirassed bust right / CONCORDI - A AVGGGS, Constantinopolis, helmeted and with head right, seated facing on throne, holding scepter and globe; right foot on prow. In exergue, CONOB. C 9. RIC 69a. Depeyrot 41/2.

The younger son of the mighty Valentinian I by his second wife Justina, Flavius Valentinianus was only four years old when his father died campaigning against the Germans. Although his 16-year-old brother Gratian was already Augustus and should have succeeded smoothly, the Empress Justina feared a loss of influence and induced a cabal of senior officers to proclaim Valentinian II as co-emperor five days later. Gratian reacted charitably to this illegal elevation and agreed to share power with his little brother. At Gratian's suggestion, Valentinian took jurisdiction over western Illyria, Italy and Africa, while Gratian took charge of the more threatened provinces of Gaul, Germany, and Britain. Things took a serious turn in AD 383, when Gratian was overthrown and killed by the Count of Britain, Magnus Maximus. At first, the usurper made no move against the weak regime of Valentinian in Milan. But in 387, Maximus invaded Italy, forcing Valentinian and his mother to flee to Thessalonica and seek protection from Theodosius I, Emperor of the East. A lightning campaign in AD 388 defeated Maximus and restored Valentinian's authority, now over the entire Western Roman Empire. Valentinian was now 17, but still untried, so Theodosius appointed the Frankish general Arbogast as his military mentor. Valentinian came to resent Arbogast's authority and, in AD 392, he handed Arbogast an order for his dismissal. Arbogast merely smiled and tore it up. He, in turn, placed Valentinian under comfortable detention at a palace in Vienna. Locked in a gilded cage, the 21-year-old emperor despaired and hung himself, igniting yet another spasm of civil war. Having never truly ruled, his abilities and character are difficult to assess, but one can readily sympathize with his predicament.

Reprinted from *Heritage World & Ancient Coins Auction* January 6-7 & 15-17, 2013, New York. Lot 21427.

Article and images courtesy of Heritage Auctions (HA.com).

*NI*

**Kingdom of Hawaii, Eighth Dollar 1883**  
**Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles**  
 Courtesy of Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles (goldbergcoins.com)



Hawaii. Pattern 12½ Cents (Eighth Dollar), 1883. KM-4. Silver. Obverse: Bare head right. Reverse: Bears the Hawaiian denomination HAPAWALU in a laurel wreath, the English equivalent below, EIGHTH DOL. with royal motto as legend. One of only 20 Proofs struck from a single pair of dies and included in Proof sets made for presentation to Hawaiian notables. This seemingly odd denomination was first specified because it was equal to the old Spanish Real valued at 12½ cents that had long circulated in the islands. Ex: The Forsythe Collection.

Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles, Sale 72, *The Pre-Long Beach Auction*, February 3-6, 2013. Lot 5731.

Hawaii. 12½ Cent Struck in Platinum, 1883. Weight 7.29 grams. Dated 1883 and struck circa 1900. On the holder Hawaii (fantasy) strike hub impression eighth dollar with lazy 8s with a format that imitates Medcalf-2CS.2. Obverse: Head of King Kalakaua I, facing right. Reverse: HAPAWALU within a wreath, with EIGHTH DOL. below. Originally part of a set of three platinum pieces (with the Quarter and Half Dollar), all are unofficial issues, probably struck at a later date, possibly Ex: The Palace Collections of Egypt (the King Farouk sale) lots 1502, 1503, and 1504. The Farouk sale catalog calls all three pieces unique, but there may be two or three pieces known of each. Sharply struck with slightly granular surfaces. Ex: Palace Sale King Farouk 1954 Lot 1504.

Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles, Sale 72, *The Pre-Long Beach Auction*, February 3-6, 2013. Lot 4941.

*NI*

## **An Unpublished 4 Taler of Transylvania**

**Robert Ronus, NI #LM139**

Transylvania is best known in America as the home of Count Dracula and his vampires, an invention of the 19th century English novelist Bram Stoker, vaguely based on Vlad the Impaler, prince of neighboring Wallachia (1456-76), a national hero in Romania for his battles against the Turkish invaders. The Turks gained control of Wallachia and Moldavia and Transylvania became the border state between the Ottoman and Habsburg empires. The princes of Transylvania, under constant pressure from both sides, tried to play off one against the other.



**(Enlarged 1.25×)**

Michael Apafi was made Prince of Transylvania by the Ottomans in 1661 after they defeated and killed his predecessor, Johann Kemeny. His realm consisted of small enclaves scattered among the strongholds of Turkish and Imperial troops who numbered in the thousands. In 1664 he had secret negotiations with the Hungarians to join an anti-Turkish coalition but after some brief fighting the Emperor and Sultan made peace, leaving Michael Apafi to negotiate his independence with both sides. When the Turks laid siege to Vienna in 1683, he had to take part on the Ottoman side. He was rewarded by the Sultan with the promise of the succession of his son as Prince of Transylvania. However, the Habsburg forces not only saved Vienna but occupied large parts of Transylvania. Michael Apafi nevertheless successfully negotiated with the Austrians to keep his throne, although he and the Estates of Transylvania were forced to recognize Austrian suzerainty. Michael died in 1690. His son, Michael II, a minor, succeeded him but quickly abdicated in favor of Emperor Leopold I in 1691.

Resch, the standard work on Transylvanian coins, lists 282 coins, including patterns, under Michael Apafi. In my experience they are all relatively uncommon, even minors. I recently had the opportunity to examine what may be rarer than any of them, a 1662 4 Taler coin, which, as far as I know, is unpublished.

The dies appear to be the same as those used for the single Taler of that year (Davenport 4771, Resch 9):

Obverse: clover “MICHA.APAFI.D.G.PR.TR” Half-fig. rt. in feathered cap with lion head on shoulder holding scepter, breaking out of circle.

Reverse: “.PAR.REG.HVN.D” (lord of part of the kingdom of Hungary). “.E.SICV.CO” (and count of the Szecklers). 1662. Crowned Transylvanian arms (the Szeckler sun and Hungarian half eagle) on the left and on the right the crescent of the Szecklers and 7 city gates of the 7 Saxon cities of Transylvania, with the Apafi arms (vine over helmet transfixed by sword) in center, in elaborate frame; below shield with Hermannstadt arms (crossed swords), breaking out of circle.

Edge: Plain

The coin, minted in Hermannstadt (*Sibiu* in Romanian), has a typical Taler diameter of 42 mm but weighs 116.53 grams! It is about 5 mm thick. The coin is not listed in Davenport, Resch, Wormser or the useful Transylvania Coins virtual catalogue available on the internet (the source of most of the brief history above).

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[www.transylvanian-numismatics.com/coins](http://www.transylvanian-numismatics.com/coins).



### Membership Report

The following person has applied for membership. Unless objections in writing are received by July 1, 2013 the membership is effective that day.

2758 Colin Peter Palmer RXLD, 303 E. 5th St., Los Angeles, CA 90013-1505.  
Rare world coins, notes and stamps.



## The Numismatics International Seminar June 7—9, 2013

## **The Modern Coins of Thxoïs, Trebizond**

### **Derwin Mak, Count of Thxoïs**

#### **The Imperial Family of Lascaris-Comnenus and Its Nobility**

The Empire of Trebizond was a successor state to the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire. It lay on the southeastern shore of the Black Sea and was founded in April 1204 by Alexius I Comnenus, grandson of Byzantine Emperor Andronicus I Comnenus and great-great-grandson of an earlier Alexius I, also an Emperor. Trebizond outlasted the Byzantine Empire by eight years and finally fell to the Ottoman Turks on August 15, 1461.

The Trapezuntine Imperial Family of Lascaris-Comnenus went into exile and survives to this day. A branch of the family went to Spain in 1870. In 1923, during a time of political turmoil, a delegation of Greek officers and politicians offered the crown of King of the Hellenes to Prince Eugene II, the Spanish Lascaris who claimed the role of head of the Imperial Family. However, Eugene II did not replace the then-reigning King George II. Neither man was King of the Hellenes by 1924, when Greece abolished its monarchy and established a republic. Eugene II died in 1962 and was succeeded by his son, Prince Theodore IX. In 2006, Prince Theodore IX died and was succeeded by his son, Prince Eugene III. A brief history of the Imperial Family is on the website [www.orderofsteugene.com](http://www.orderofsteugene.com).

The Lascaris-Comnenus princes granted titles of nobility to their friends and supporters. My American friend Russell R. Fritz, Exarch for North America of the Imperial Order of St. Eugene of Trebizond (see again [www.orderofsteugene.com](http://www.orderofsteugene.com)), received the title of Marquis of Marykatos and was later promoted to Duke. In 1995, the Marquis of Marykatos granted the title of Count of Thxoïs to me ("Thxoïs" is pronounced to rhyme with "Lois," the girl's name). Thxoïs was a town on the Büyük Menderes River in present-day Aydın Province, Turkey. The town was part of the Byzantine Empire until circa 1070, when Islamic forces conquered it.

The title was quite an honour for me. Not only did it make me a Trapezuntine and Byzantine nobleman, but it fit well with my interest in Roman and Byzantine history. It was my best subject in high school (a 98% score, which my teacher said was a record in his career). Eventually, I would use my title to combine my interests in history and exonymia.

#### **Revival of Trapezuntine Coinage**

However, I did not do much with my Trapezuntine title until 2012, when I issued coins for my Countship of Thxoïs. Thus I revived the ancient coinage of Trebizond.

Interestingly, my Trebizond coins are not the first Trapezuntine coinage since the fall of Trebizond in 1461. There is an Italian branch of the Imperial Family, and one of the Italians, Mario Bernardo Angelo Comneno, as Prince Michael III, issued his own Trebizond coinage in 1955. These coins are listed in George Cuhaj and Thomas Michael's *Unusual World Coins*. The writer has heard that there was rivalry between Eugene II and Michael III over their claims to the long-defunct empire.

Any coinage, even those for nobility in exile, requires much planning. First, I had to decide on a language for the coins' legends. Greek was the natural language for

Byzantine and Trapezuntine coins. Unfortunately, I knew little Greek and could not read and write in the Greek alphabet. However, like many numismatists, I knew enough Latin to translate coin legends and knew various Latin terms and phrases even if I couldn't form a sentence on my own. Hence, my coins would have Latin legends. This might seem incongruous for the coins of a Byzantine successor state, but they do symbolize that the Byzantine and Trapezuntine empires were continuations of the Roman Empire, where Latin originated. Indeed, the Byzantine Greeks usually referred to themselves as Romans. The term "Byzantine" was created by the German historian Hieronymus Wolf in 1557.

Michael III's coins are denominated in francs, a curious choice for an Italian claiming an ancient Roman-Greek empire. I could have used old Byzantine and Greek denominations such as asper and drachma, but they seemed incongruous with the Latin legends on the coins. The pan-European denomination of euro was out of the question due to the euro's association with the Greek monetary crisis. I also considered old Roman, Papal, and Italian denominations like denarius, scudo, and lira. Eventually, I chose the tallero, a denomination last used in Italian Eritrea. I divided the Thxois tallero into 100 centesemi, the subunit of the old Italian lira.

Each coin has a common reverse depicting the coat of arms of Trebizond. The Lascaris-Comnenus emperors used a shield of seven white and black alternating horizontal bars, starting with a white bar on top. I commissioned the coins' mint to design a modern rendition showing the shield borne on the breast of the Byzantine double-headed eagle. Most historical depictions of the double-headed eagle show it holding a sword and an orb, but I changed the sword to a cross as a sign of the new nobility's piety. Above the eagle is the Justinian Crown, a heraldic symbol used by the modern-day Imperial Family of Lascaris-Comnenus. The reverse legend is THXOIS • IMPERIVM TRAPEZVS TALLERO (Thxois, Trebizond Empire Tallero).

From March 2012 to January 2013, I issued three tallero coins. They commemorate famous Byzantine and Roman persons. All tallero coins have the following technical specifications:

Mintage: 100 pieces  
Diameter: 1-1/2 inches  
Metal: nickel-plated brass

The coins were struck by Challenge Coins Plus, a Winter Springs, Florida, firm that usually strikes military challenge coins. All coins come with a certificate of authenticity. Those given by me to recipients in person come with a generic clear plastic case used by Challenge Coins Plus. Those sent by mail do not always have the case.

### **1,700th Anniversary of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge**

On March 1, 2012, I issued a tallero to commemorate the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, which occurred on October 28, 312 (Figure 1).

In October 312, Constantine the Great prepared to fight Emperor Maxentius in the civil wars of the Tetrarchy. According to legend, Constantine saw a Chi-Rho and the words "Ev Τούτῳ Νικά" in the sky. The Chi-Rho is a Christian symbol formed by superimposing the first two capital letters of the word "ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ" or "Christ" in



Greek. The words "Εν Τούτῳ Νικά" translate to "In hoc signo vinces" in Latin or "In this sign, you will conquer" in English.



**Figure 1**

The vision inspired Constantine to fight for Christianity at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge. Constantine defeated Maxentius and issued the Edict of Milan, which proclaimed tolerance of all religions throughout the empire. This edict allowed anyone to worship whichever deity they chose, thus ending the persecution of Christians while Constantine was in power (subsequent emperors would rescind such tolerance and freedom).

Although Constantine supported several religions, Christianity would not have flourished as it did without his efforts. In addition to ending the persecution of Christians, he summoned the Council of Nicaea, the first ecumenical council, to obtain consensus on Christian ideas. Constantine eventually became the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity.



**Figure 2**

The obverse depicts Constantine the Great seeing the vision of the Chi-Rho, based on Gian Lorenzo Bernini's statue of Constantine on horseback, displayed in the Vatican (Figure 2). The legend is: IMP. CONSTANTINVS MAGNVS • IN HOC SIGNO VINCES • CCCXII – MMXII (Emperor Constantine the Great • In this sign, you will conquer • 312 – 2012).

## 1,480th Anniversary of Empress Theodora's Speech to Justinian and His Ministers

Several Roman Emperors portrayed their wives, sisters and mothers on coins. Empress Theodora, wife of Justinian the First, was the most influential woman in Roman history, but she has never appeared on a coin—until now. On July 20, 2012, I solved this glaring omission in Roman numismatics by issuing the first coin ever to depict Theodora (Figure 3).



**Figure 3**

Theodora's parents were circus performers: her father was a bear trainer and her mother was a dancer and actress. Theodora became an actress too. Unlike today, actors and entertainers were not hailed as great public figures or suitable members of the Order of the British Empire or *l'Ordre des Arts and des Lettres*. Instead, Roman society considered them to be the social equals of prostitutes. Despite such lowly origins, Theodora attracted and married Emperor Justinian and became a formidable partner in his reign.

In January 532, the Blue and Green political factions fought after a chariot race in the Hippodrome. The Nika Riots grew so violent that they threatened the government. Justinian and his ministers prepared to flee Constantinople, but Theodora insisted on staying in the city. She told them, "Those who have worn the crown will not survive its loss. I will never see the day when I am not saluted as an empress. Purple makes a fine shroud." In other words, it is better to die as an emperor than live as an exile. Her stirring speech inspired Justinian and his men to stay and fight. They subsequently attacked the Hippodrome and killed 30,000 rebels, thus restoring law and order.

I commissioned Canadian artist Tina Olah (<http://kittensoft.deviantart.com/>) to draw a picture of Empress Theodora for the coin. I did not require the drawing to resemble the image of Theodora in the famous mosaic at the Basilica of San Vitale in Ravenna, Italy (Figure 4). Instead, I told Tina to show Theodora like a beautiful queen from a Cecil B. DeMille movie. Her illustration of Theodora (Figure 5) is quite different from the mosaic at San Vitale.

**The obverse legend is THEODORA AUGVSTA, as wives of emperors were addressed as "Augusta."**



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

### **Emperor Saint John IV Doukas Laskaris**

At the suggestion of my friend, the fantasy fiction author and ancient coins numismatist Darrell Schweitzer, I issued a tallero in honor of Emperor Saint John IV Doukas Laskaris on January 18, 2013 (Figure 6).

John IV was only seven years old when he became Emperor on the death of his father. Unfortunately, the nobleman Michael Paleologus overthrew John IV and blinded him on his eleventh birthday, Christmas Day, 1261. The Greek Orthodox Church excommunicated Michael Paleologus for this atrocity, but Michael nonetheless became emperor and founder of the Paleologus Dynasty. John IV spent the rest of his life as a monk. In 1290, Emperor Andronikos II Paleologus visited John and asked for forgiveness of his father's horrible actions. John forgave Michael and was later canonized as a saint of the Orthodox Church. He was the only Laskaris emperor to become a saint.



**Figure 6**

The obverse is based on the only portrait of John IV, from a 15th century manuscript. The legend is SANCTVS IOANNES IV DOVKAS LASKARIS • BASILEVS • (Saint John IV Doukas Laskaris, Basileus). Basileus was the Greek title, the equivalent of a Western title of emperor that Byzantine rulers used in John IV's time.

#### **Future Issues**

There may be future issues of Trapezuntine coins, given my interest in Roman and Byzantine history.

Persons interested in obtaining my Thxoïs, Trebizond coins may contact me via email at [dmak0525@rogers.com](mailto:dmak0525@rogers.com).

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#### **Ionía, Miletos. Electrum Stater**

**Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles**

**Courtesy of Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles ([goldbergcoins.com](http://goldbergcoins.com))**



According to Herodotus, the Lydians were the first people to use electrum coinage.

*Continued on p. 98...*

## Coins Countermarked with Political Messages and Related Pieces

Gregory G. Brunk, NI #749

(Continued from March /April 2013 *NI Bulletin*)

### Catalog: Part U (United Kingdom)

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#### — UNITED KINGDOM —

A multitude of coins were countermarked for monetary, advertising, and token purposes in late 18th and 19th century in Britain, and some of them might be mistaken as political issues (see Brunk 2003 and Manville 2001). There also are the George III bust countermarks that were applied by the Royal Mint for the Bank of England on over two million Spanish-American eight reales in 1797. The value of these coins was tarified by the Bank at four shillings, nine pence—which was more than their bullion value—as a way to keep them in circulation with a stable value.



#### Spanish-American Eight Reales

The oval countermark was extensively counterfeited, as was the Bank's later George III bust in octagon countermark that was used in 1804. Many of the counterfeit stamps are so well made that the Bank could not distinguish them from its own stamps! Others are crude copies. A contemporary couplet referred to these countermarked eight reales.

The Bank, to make their Spanish dollars pass,  
Stamped the head of a fool on the neck of an ass.

A less commonly quoted saying noted the eight reales were worth less than the five shillings of an English crown. "Two king's heads not worth a crown."

#### Jacobites

The British Isles were embroiled in a series of dynastic and religious conflicts during the 16th and 17th centuries, which were partly a result of Henry VIII's creation of the Anglican Church in the first half of the 16th century. The Scottish and English regal lines were united in 1603 under King James VI of Scotland, who became James I of England, but political, religious and regional conflicts continued for over a century.

The English Civil War was one result. Charles I, the son of James I, was beheaded in 1649, and England was ruled by the Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell until 1658. The Commonwealth tried to suppress Catholicism in Ireland and stripped Catholics of

their civil rights. Within three years of Cromwell's death, the Stuart dynasty regained the throne and Charles II was king. When Charles died in 1685, his son James II became king, but this James was a Catholic convert, and it was feared he would attempt to impose the religion that many of his subjects had repudiated generations earlier. James II was forced to abdicate in 1688. Then his Protestant daughter, Mary II and her Protestant husband, William of Orange became joint rulers.

James II formed an army in Ireland and tried to depose William and Mary. The forces of the two English kings met at the battle of the Boyne in 1690. The Catholics were defeated and James II fled to France, where he died in 1701. ("1690" is a 20th century political countermark that commemorates that battle and was listed under Northern Ireland.) His followers did not accept William and Mary as legitimate rulers, and continued to support James II and then his heirs.

James Edward was the son of James II. He was born in London in 1688 and was called James III or the Old Pretender. When his father died in 1701, James III became the Stuart or "Jacobite" claimant to the English and Scottish thrones. The kingdoms were united by the Act of Union in 1707, which created Great Britain. When the Stuart dynasty ended and George I came from the German state of Hanover to become ruler of Great Britain in 1714, the Jacobites refused to acknowledge him as king and refused to acknowledge all the subsequent Hanoverians as legitimate rulers. James III eventually died in Rome.

The son of James III, Charles Edward (Bonnie Prince Charlie—Editor) was born in Rome in 1720. He was known to Jacobites as Charles III or the Young Pretender. Charles III came to Scotland in 1745 and mobilized an army. His forces were defeated in 1746 at Culloden, which was the last battle fought on British soil. It sometimes is called the Battle of the Clans since Highland Scots supported the Jacobite cause, while many of the Lowland Scots fought with the English. The Young Pretender escaped to France. He died in 1788, but the Jacobites and their clubs continued to have considerable support into the 19th century.

Fred Pridmore (1978), the famous British numismatist, attributed this odd countermark to the Jacobites. It consists of three separate stamps, which are incuse. According to Pridmore, IR indicates Jacobvs Rex. The cross patee and heart is the Stuart emblem, which is reversed in the countermark to mourn the defeat of the Jacobites and the repression of Roman Catholicism.

Pridmore commented about the piece that it "probably was used as a passport to secret meetings of the adherents of the king over the water." The "king over the water" was in exile on the Continent, and that was how the Pretender was referred to in Jacobite toasts. Stated less dramatically, such countermarked coins likely indicated membership in a Jacobite club, and were similar to Masonic mark pennies. According to the Joseph Lepczyk Auction of Feb. 24, 1982, lot 1729, Pridmore knew of three examples of this sort of countermarked coin. The illustrated piece was either minted in 1696 or 1697, but is too worn to read the last digit.

**Cross Patee / Inverted Heart / IR**  
English Shilling: 169X



**Shilling (Enlarged)**

**Charles James Fox**

This countermark refers to the Whig politician who was foreign minister at the time of his death in 1806. During his long career, Charles James Fox conducted a vendetta against King George III and opposed him on almost every policy issue. That seems to be the meaning of this piece, which was made from single letter punches.

**NO TRAITORS / NO FOX**  
Halfpenny: 1799

**Unidentified Bust**

Two examples of this countermark have appeared at auction. Both times the bust was identified as George Washington. The style of the stamp is British, and it seems unlikely to portray Washington, but I've been unable to identify the bust. It also seems unlikely that it is an imitation of the George III oval stamp since it does not appear on Spanish-American coins.

**Unidentified Bust Right**  
Bank of English Three Shillings: 1811  
Bank of Ireland Ten Pence: 1813



**Bank of England 1811 Three Shilling**



**Bank of Ireland 1813 Ten Pence**

## **Earl Grey**

Charles Grey was the second Earl Grey and the Whig Prime Minister (1830-1834) under whose leadership the Great Reform Bill of 1832 was passed; it modernized the British electoral system. Before then such large cities as Manchester and Leeds had no representatives in the House of Commons, while some members of Parliament were elected from districts with only a few voters. An early 19th century politician could literally buy a seat in Parliament by purchasing a handful of votes in one of these “rotten boroughs.” Grey also was responsible for the 1833 act that abolished slavery in the British Empire. The maker of this countermark, which was made from single letter punches, sounded-out the Prime Minister’s name as “Gray.”

### **EARL GRAY / 1832**

Rev: **REFORMER**

Cartwheel Penny: 1797

## **Daniel O’Connell**

Daniel O’Connell was the most important Irish politician of the first part of the 19th century. The 1801 Act of Union created the United Kingdom by merging Ireland with Great Britain (England and Scotland). O’Connell campaigned for the repeal of the act and for the emancipation of Catholics (to be seated in Parliament—*Editor*), who did not have equal rights with Protestants.

### **Inverted Crown / DANIEL OCONNELL**

Cartwheel Penny: 1797

## **Mafeking**

The siege of the South African town of Mafeking during the Second Boer War began in 1899 and lasted into 1900. Its defense by Robert Baden-Powell—who founded the Boy Scouts—made Powell a national hero. At the same time in the US a popular brand of soap was named for Admiral Dewey, who was an American hero of the Spanish-American War. So it is possible these MAFEKING pieces made from a prepared stamp are advertising, rather than political countermarks.

Nevertheless, it is unusual to find advertising countermarks on such late British coins. Why? So many coins were countermarked by *Lloyd’s Penny Sunday Times* during the first part of the century that in 1853 Parliament passed an *Act to Prevent the Defacing of the Current Coin of the Realm*, which had an unanticipated consequence. During the second half of the 19th century, most British merchants *only* countermarked the Continental bronzes—mostly French coins—that circulated in the British Isles. They were the size of pennies and halfpennies. French merchants did likewise with British coins, which means that European advertising countermarks of the late 19th century rarely appear on coins of the nation where they were stamped and circulated (Brunk 2003).



## **MAFEKING**

Penny: 1900 (2)



**Penny**

## **Suffragettes**

The Women's Social and Political Union was formed in 1903 to gain equal rights for women. Its members often were imprisoned for inciting riots over the next decades, and it was not until 1928 that Britain granted women the right to vote. These pieces are struck from single letter punches.

### **VOTES / FOR / WOMEN**

British Penny: 1893, 1902, 1907



**Penny**



**Penny**

## **War Bonds**

### **BUY / WAR BONDS**

British Penny: 1917

## **Nazis**

Shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War, *The Numismatist* (1938: 775) noted, "*Spink's Numismatic Circular* reports that a number of British shillings have been found with a crude countermark of a swastika above the head of George V. They are believed to have been so stamped when Germany annexed Austria. Most of them were taken from slot machines and found their way to banks before being noticed."

### **Swastika**

British Shillings

## SPENCE'S PLAN

Thomas Spence is called the “world’s first socialist.” In 1790 he presented a paper to the Newcastle Philosophical Society and advocated that hospitals, libraries and schools be run by the state. According to “Spence’s Plan,” the nation’s lands would be owned by the people and administered at the parish level. Spence’s views were severely criticized at the time, and he was expelled from the society (Bell 1965).

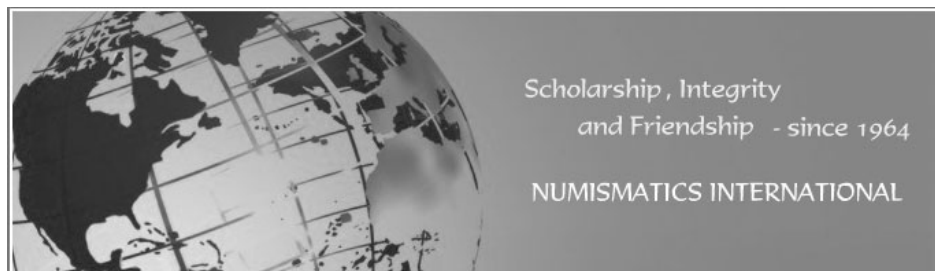


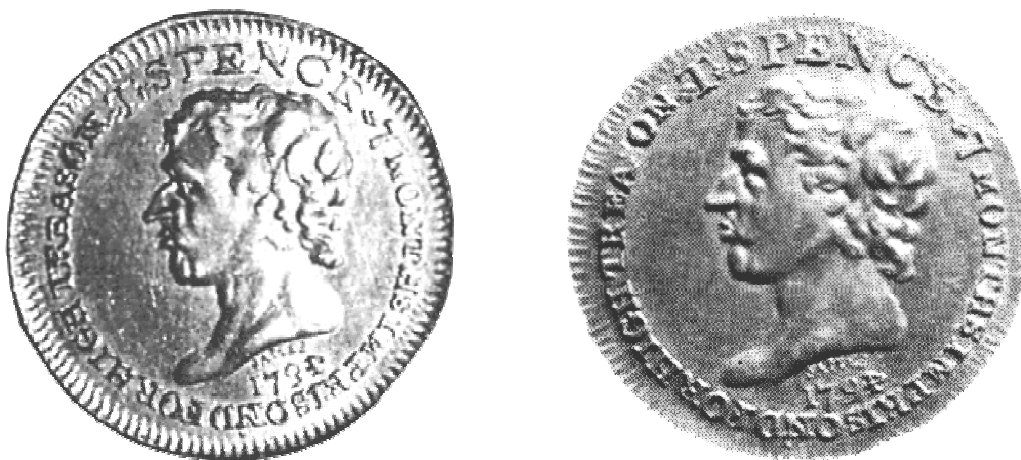
**Farthing Token (Enlarged)**

*Spence farthing token advertising his journal Pig's Meat.*

He moved to London in 1792, where he published many books, pamphlets and the penny weekly, *Pig's Meat* that advocated his policies. Spence was held in Newgate Prison for treason for seven months in 1794 because of his political activities, but was released without trial by the end of the year. He returned to being a book seller and issued over one hundred varieties of tokens that were more like small medals than circulating tokens. Most of them have a political theme, and he published a catalog of English tokens for collectors in 1795.

Spence went bankrupt in 1797, sold his token dies, and began to countermark large numbers of coins to push Spence's Plan. A comment written on the back of a Spence envelope by one of his correspondents noted that Spence “was zealously employed in disseminating a knowledge of his Plan. with this view, he stamped the current coin with the word's ‘Spence's Plan,’ and his disciples chalked... (his slogans) on every wall in London” (Thompson 1969: 154-155). In other words, his actions might not have been treasonous, but he certainly had become a public pest.





**Halfpenny Tokens (Enlarged)**

**Two varieties of Spence's self-portrait halfpenny tokens with his bust and the legend "T. Spence – 7 Months Imprison'd for High Treason 1794."**

Spence employed his stamps according to the space available on a particular coin, and many of his pieces seem to be countermarked from almost randomly selected stamps. He had more room to engrave a coherent inscription on his struck tokens. One of them has the legend "Spence's Glorious Plan is Parochial Partnership in Land without Private Landlordism" around a rising sun. Its reverse is "This Just Plan Will Produce Everlasting Peace and Happiness or in Fact the Millenium" around a scales, olive branch and cornucopia symbolizing justice, peace and plenty.

Apparently Spence did not stamp any coins after 1798, having been imprisoned again in April of that year. Nevertheless, his countermarks are reasonably common, and hundreds of pieces with a multitude of different slogans have been noted. Indeed, A. W. Waters had almost 300 in his collection (Thompson 1971: 138). Spence's stamps mostly appear on 18th century halfpenny-size coins and tokens, but also appear on blank planchets which are the size of 1770-1775 Tower halfpence. Spence had these planchets specially made for his activities. Half a dozen of Spence's slogans also have been seen on the very large, 1797 cartwheel pennies.

Spence used twenty-eight different prepared stamps to make slogans:

<b>AND</b>		<b>NO</b>
<b>&amp;</b>		<b>OR</b>
<b>BLESSING</b>		<b>OURS</b>
<b>EVERY</b>		<b>PAROCHIAL</b>
<b>FAT</b>		<b>PARTNERSHIP</b>
<b>BAIRNS</b>		<b>PEACE</b>
<b>FOR EVER</b>		<b>PLENTY</b>
<b>FULL</b>		<b>READ</b>
<b>BELLIES</b>		<b>SMALL FARMS</b>
<b>IN</b>		<b>SPENCE'S PLAN</b>
<b>IS</b>		<b>STARVATION</b>
<b>LAND</b>		<b>THE WAR</b>
<b>LANDLORDS</b>		<b>YOU FOOLS</b>
<b>LIBERTY</b>		<b>YOU ROGUES</b>

Many of Spence's countermarked coins do not include his name, but they are easy to recognize once a person has seen a few examples because all of his stamps have a similar letter style. The following is a random sample of his pieces.

# **LIBERTY**

Rev: **LIBERTY**



**Halfpenny Token (Enlarged)**

**NO / LANDLORDS / YOU FOOLS / SPENCE'S PLAN / FOREVER**



**Cartwheel Penny (Enlarged)**

**SPENCE'S PLAN / & / FULL BELLIES**

Rev: **LAND IN PARTNERSHIP**



**Halfpenny size planchet (Enlarged)**

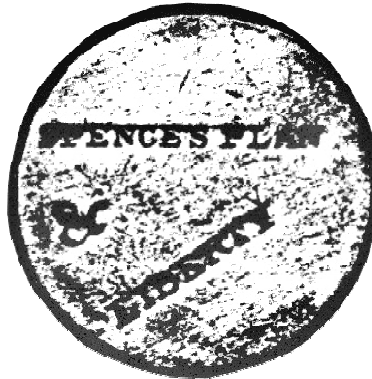
## SPENCE'S PLAN

Rev: AND / FULL BELLIES / YOU ROGUES



Halfpenny size planchet (Enlarged)

## SPENCE'S PLAN / & / LIBERTY



Halfpenny size planchet (Enlarged)

## Spencean System

The Dec. 16, 1816, *Devizes Gazette* noted pennies and shillings counterstamped SPENCEAN SYSTEM had started to circulate in Exeter (Robinson 1987: 266). None of them are found in contemporary collections, which isn't all that surprising because Manville (2001) also found a number of contemporary notices regarding British monetary countermarks that are unknown today in collections.

These countermarked coins may have been issued shortly before Spence's death when the Luddite riots against mechanization provided a justification for his new journal, *The Giant-Killer or Anti-Landlord*. He died in September of 1814 after only a few issues were published. So it is more likely these countermarked coins were stamped by members of the Society of Spencean Philanthropists, which was formed by his followers to keep Spence's ideas alive.

## SPENCEAN SYSTEM

Reportedly exists on English pennies and shillings, but none have been noted in the modern literature.

## Engraved Coins

Many engraved English coins have appeared at auction. While the vast majority are "love tokens" of various sorts that were given as gifts or commemorated an important event in a person's life, a few may be political. This engraved George III penny, for

example, may portray a politician who is smoking a pipe. Or the bust may be that of an unknown, common person.



**English Penny**

A skilled engraver turned Victoria's portrait on an 1889 penny into a workman wearing a hat and overalls, and having a very large nose.



**English Penny**

Edward VII (1901-1910) is credited with changing the English fashion of drinking after a meal to smoking a cigar or cigarettes. Two Victoria coins—a farthing and a halfpenny—have the queen's bust turned into that of her son and successor, Edward, who is crowned and smoking. Both coins are engraved in a similar style.



**English Penny**

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## The End of an Era

Commencing in June 1984, I was appointed Abstract Editor for this journal with the task of composing short summaries of articles that appeared here. These were placed in a series of volumes published by the American Numismatic Society entitled, *Numismatic Literature*, which was a bibliography of numismatic material. I recently discovered that the ANS will cease publishing this work as of Volume 150. As a result, my position here as Abstract Editor is no longer needed.

Thank-you,

Joseph Uphoff

Our thanks go to Joseph for his twenty years of faithful service to Numismatics International as abstract editor—*Editor*.



## Member Notice

Information wanted on the Krupp company involvement with mints and coinage. This company, famous for its artillery and warships, in its early history (1810's) produced dies for various mints. At that time, they were most likely blank dies—Krupp was a steel company. Later in the 19th century, they produced minting machinery for mints all over the world, including equipment for the U.S. Mint in 1837. In 1894 Krupp produced the Italy 20 centessimi coin with KB mintmark (Krupp Berlin). Does anyone know of any books or articles on the numismatic related activities of the Krupp company? It is rumored to have been the actual mint for the China 1936 nickel coins with "A" mintmark—at its Austrian branch, but I have not been able to confirm this. Krupp may have made tokens for Southeast Asian plantations. Thanks. Bruce W. Smith, P.O. Box 529, Sheboygan, WI 53082. Email: [chinasmithbr@yahoo.com](mailto:chinasmithbr@yahoo.com).

...continued from p. 86

And up and to present day, literary tradition has deemed Lydia the birthplace of coinage. Although there is not much evidence to point specifically to Lydia, Asia Minor is most certainly the fount of the first coinage. A mixture of gold and silver known to the Greeks as *elektron* occurred as a natural ore found in nugget form in its riverbeds. These nuggets were weighed and used as a form of exchange and from them evolved the earliest coinage. It would only be natural then for the earliest coins, which would bear no design, to be globular and nugget-like in shape. The intrinsic value of early electrum was quite high, and these early coins must then have been used for the transfer of large sums, whether mercantile or governmental, or as donatives.

As a guaranty of a fixed value, punches were added to these electrum units. For scholars and numismatists, this is the determinant that ennobles these pieces as the first true coins. (In China, bronze cowrie shells dating back to 900 BC or earlier have been found in burial sites; copies of organic cowrie shells which were used as units of exchange. But these bronze cowries bear no mark of value.)

The process of adding the punches was facilitated by roughing up the surfaces, resulting in coins with rough, irregular or striated surfaces. These coins would be based on the Milesian standard of circa 14 grams which was employed in parts of Ionia and in Lydia. As a phase of the evolution of coinage, this time would be very brief. From Ionia, or Lydia, electrum coinage spread to the coastal cities of Asia Minor, to the Greek islands and then to the mainland.

The Striation Type is the first type of coin to introduce the innovation of an obverse image. According to Linzalone, the simple design was perhaps inspired by ripples on the surface of water, ripples that market the source of precious Electrum.

As the largest denomination of the first successful type coin, the extremely rare staters of the striated series are of singular importance as the premier example of the first true coin.

Description of illustrated coin (p. 86):

Ionia, Miletos. Electrum Stater (14.23g) struck ca. 660 BC. The Striation Type. Milesian standard (17.5mm). Field of striated lines. Reverse: Long slim, shallow rectangular central punch, flanked by two square shallow punches, all with uneven raised surfaces. Joseph Linzalone, *Electrum and the Invention of Coinage* (2011), 1014 (this coin); BMC 1. Considered the first true coin. Extremely Rare and one of only seven known of this type.

Ira & Larry Goldberg Coins & Collectibles, Sale 72, *The Pre-Long Beach Auction*, February 3-6, 2013. Lot 4367.

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## **The Numismatics International Seminar**

### **June 7—9, 2013**

See March/April NI Bulletin for details.